

Downloading SCDHEC Water Quality Data from the USEPA's STORET Database via the Internet

STORET (short for STOrage and RETrieval) is USEPA's repository for water quality, biological, and physical data. It is used by state environmental agencies, EPA and other federal agencies, universities, private citizens, and others. The SCDHEC's water quality data is stored in the USEPA's STORET database and is available from this source on the Internet.

STORET data available on the Internet is divided into two separate databases, according to when it was originally collected. Data collected through 1998 are stored in the STORET Legacy Data Center (Legacy STORET for short). Data collected since January 1, 1999 have been placed in the Modernized STORET System.

The procedures for downloading data from these two databases are slightly different, as is the flexibility for restricting the parameters extracted, and the format of the exported data. The following are instructions for downloading SCDHEC water quality data from both of these databases.

Within each of these databases there are many different approaches that can be used to retrieve data. These instructions document only one of these approaches, but it is the most direct approach for obtaining data for specific SCDHEC monitoring locations. To follow these instructions certain pieces of information are required. The requirements are slightly different for the two databases, e.g. Parameter Codes are only necessary when retrieving data from Legacy STORET.

REQUIRED BACKGROUND SCDHEC INFORMATION

Organization Code (or Station Org ID)

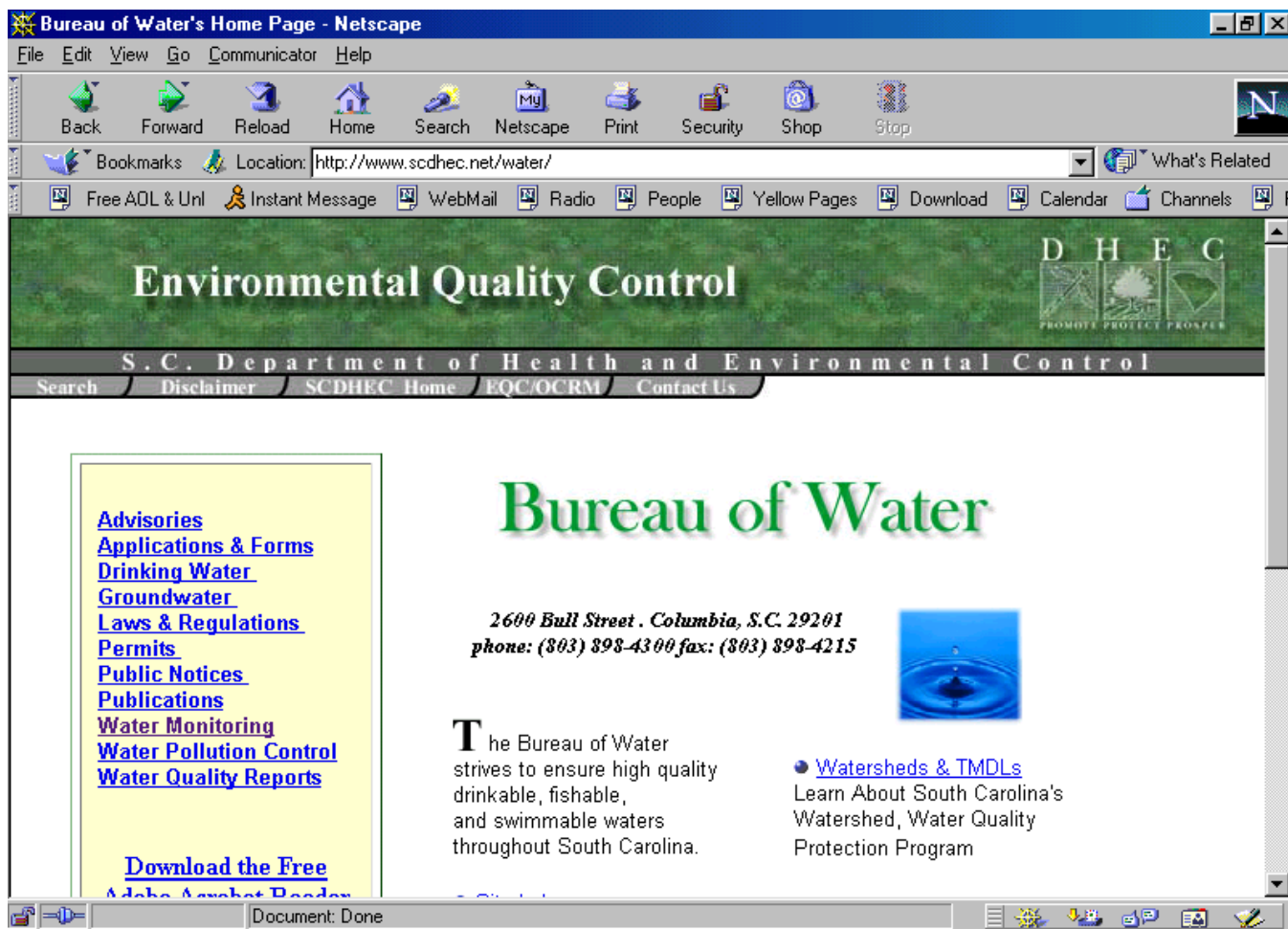
The SCDHEC STORET Organization Code is **21SC60WQ**

The following information is necessary in order to follow the instructions provided for the STORET website and can be obtained from the SCDHEC Bureau of Water website <http://www.scdhec.net/water/>

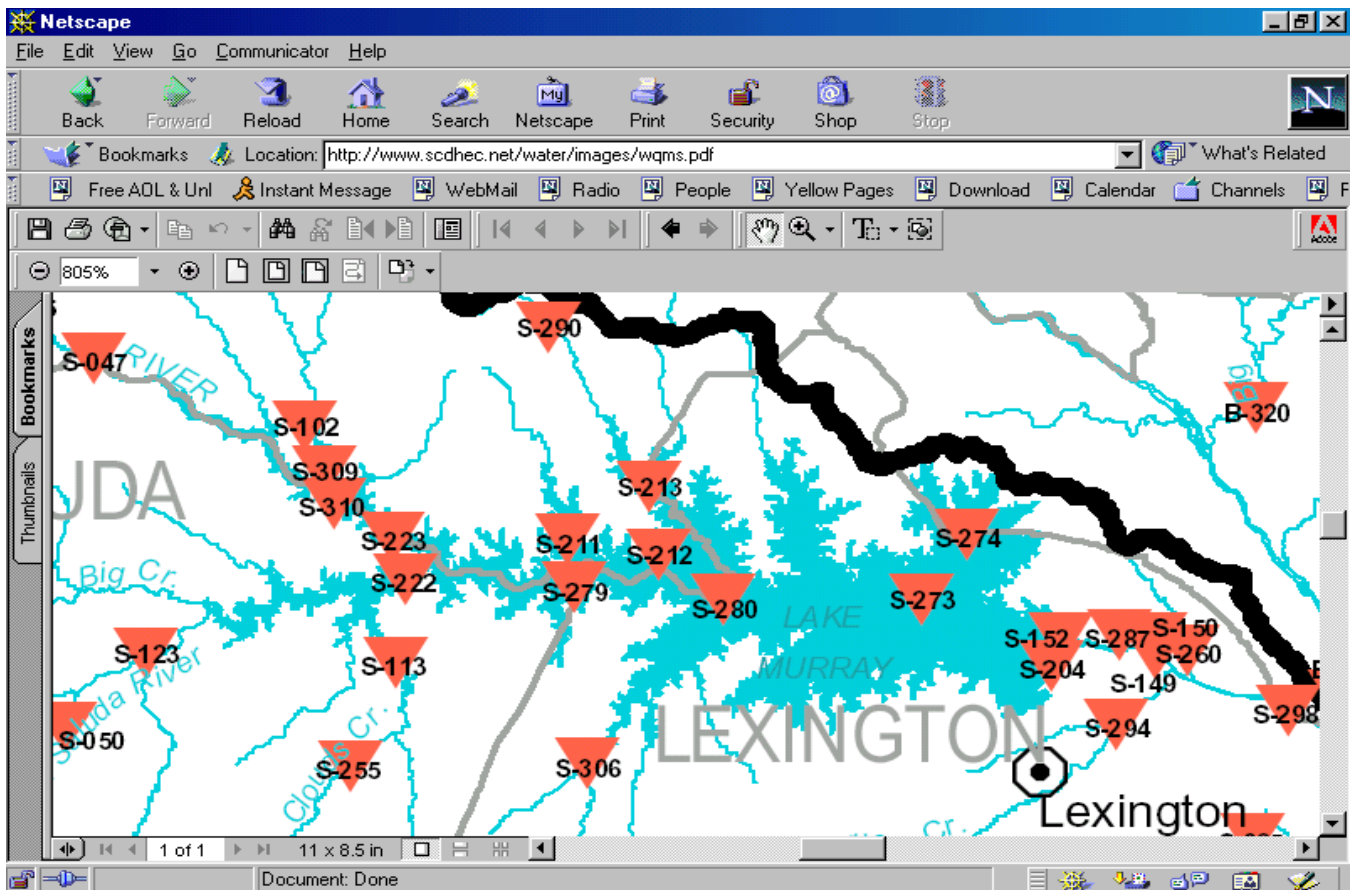
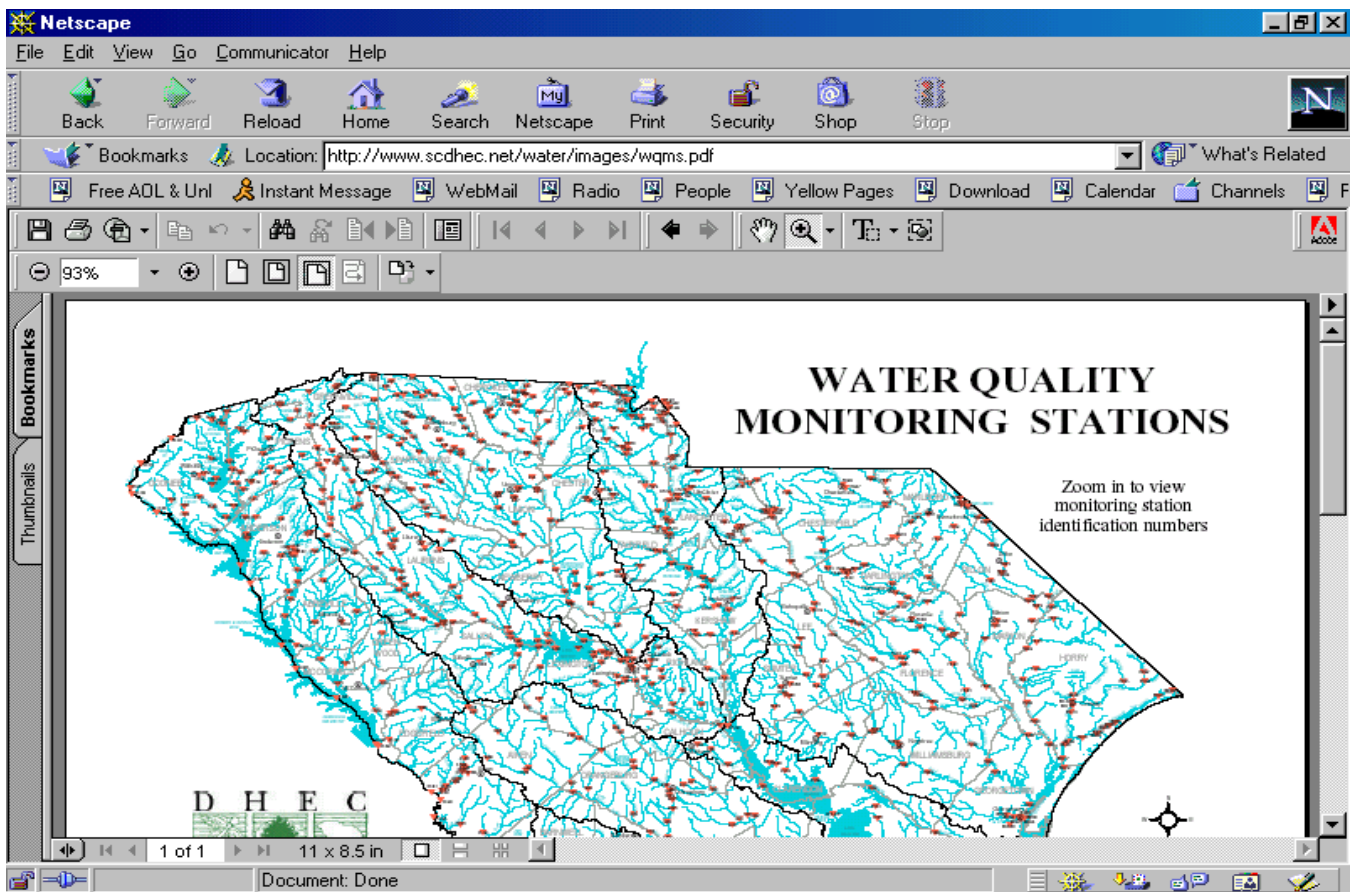
Station ID

For a map of SCDHEC monitoring site locations go to:

<http://www.scdhec.net/water/>



and select Water Monitoring from the list of topics on the left, then select Surface Water Monitoring, then Ambient Surface Water Monitoring from the top box, then select the Monitoring Stations Location Map from the upper right-hand corner. You can then use the magnifying glass tool to zoom in on a selected area of the map so the site numbers (Station IDs) are legible.



Alternately you can find lists of site numbers (Station IDs) on specific waterbodies in the State of South Carolina Monitoring Strategy, Appendix B: Ambient Surface Water Quality Monitoring Sites Listed by Waterbody, at

<http://www.scdhec.net/eqc/water/pubs/appb.pdf>

or a list of site numbers (Station IDs) and descriptions listed by region (Lab District) of the state in the State of South Carolina Monitoring Strategy, Appendix A: Ambient Surface Water Quality Monitoring Site Descriptions Listed by Laboratory District, at

<http://www.scdhec.net/eqc/water/pubs/appa.pdf>

Parameter Codes (only used in Legacy STORET)

A list of the most common STORET Parameter Codes used by SCDHEC appears in the State of South Carolina Monitoring Strategy, Appendix D: Parameters Sampled at Ambient Surface Water Quality Monitoring Sites at:

<http://www.scdhec.net/eqc/water/pubs/appd.pdf>

OBTAINING WATER QUALITY DATA FROM THE USEPA STORET WEBSITE

The address of the USEPA STORET website is

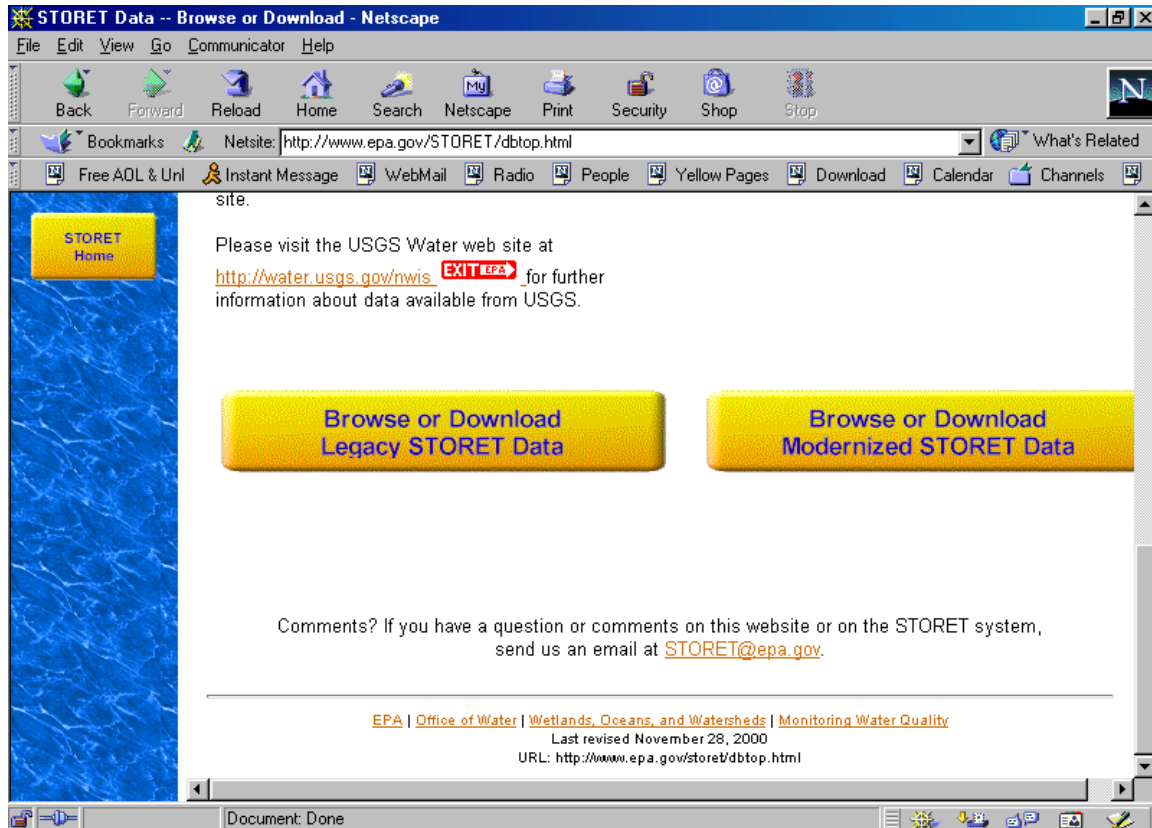
<http://www.epa.gov/STORET/>

From the main STORET home page choose “Obtaining Water Quality Data”.

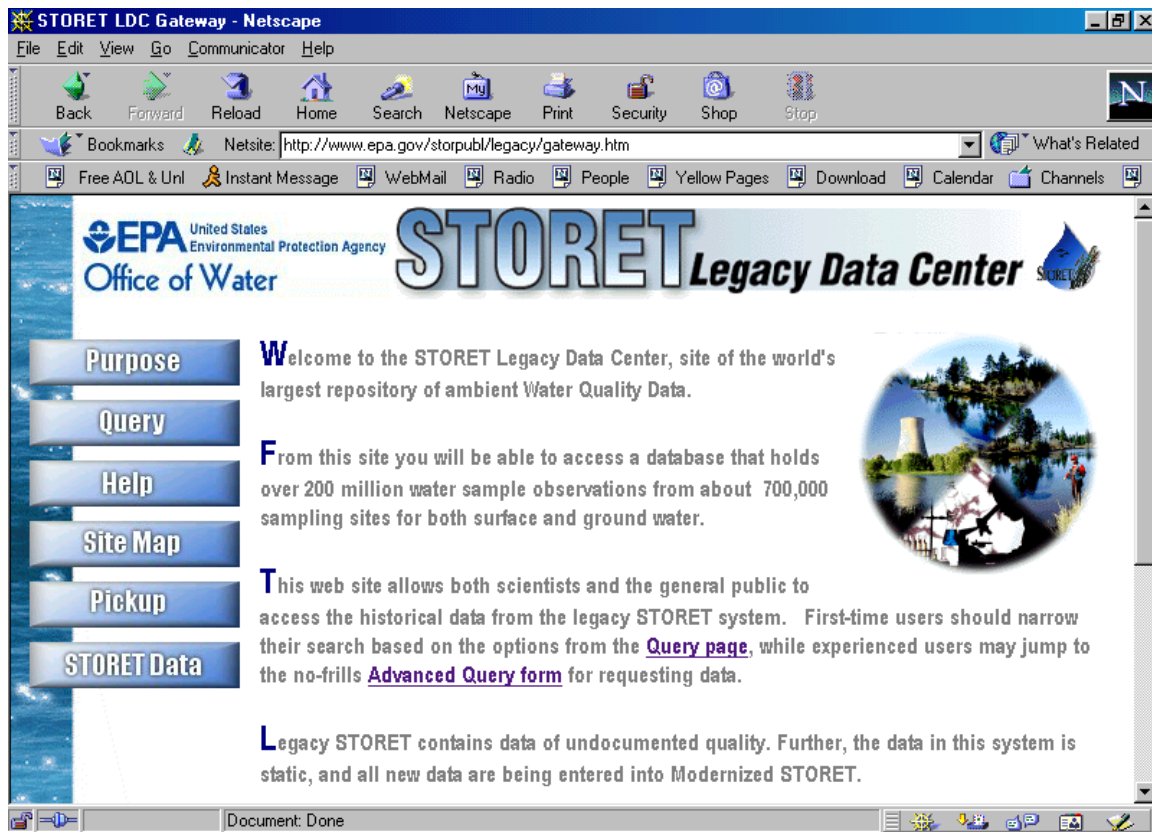


To download pre-1999 data from Legacy STORET

1. From the **STORET Database Access** page, scroll down and choose “Browse or Download Legacy STORET Data”



2. From the **STORET Legacy Data Center** home page choose the “Query” bar from the list on the left of the screen



3. From the **STORET Legacy Data Center**, Create a query page choose “Experienced STORET users can use the Advanced Query form”



This will get you to the form where you begin to specify the monitoring sites, date range, and parameters that you want to download.

Hint, this form is case-sensitive, so you will find it easiest to set “Caps Lock” on.

Step 1 – Station Criteria

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window titled "Advanced Query Input - Netscape". The address bar shows the URL "http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/legacy/proc_advanced_query". The page content is titled "Step 1- Station Criteria" and includes the following elements:

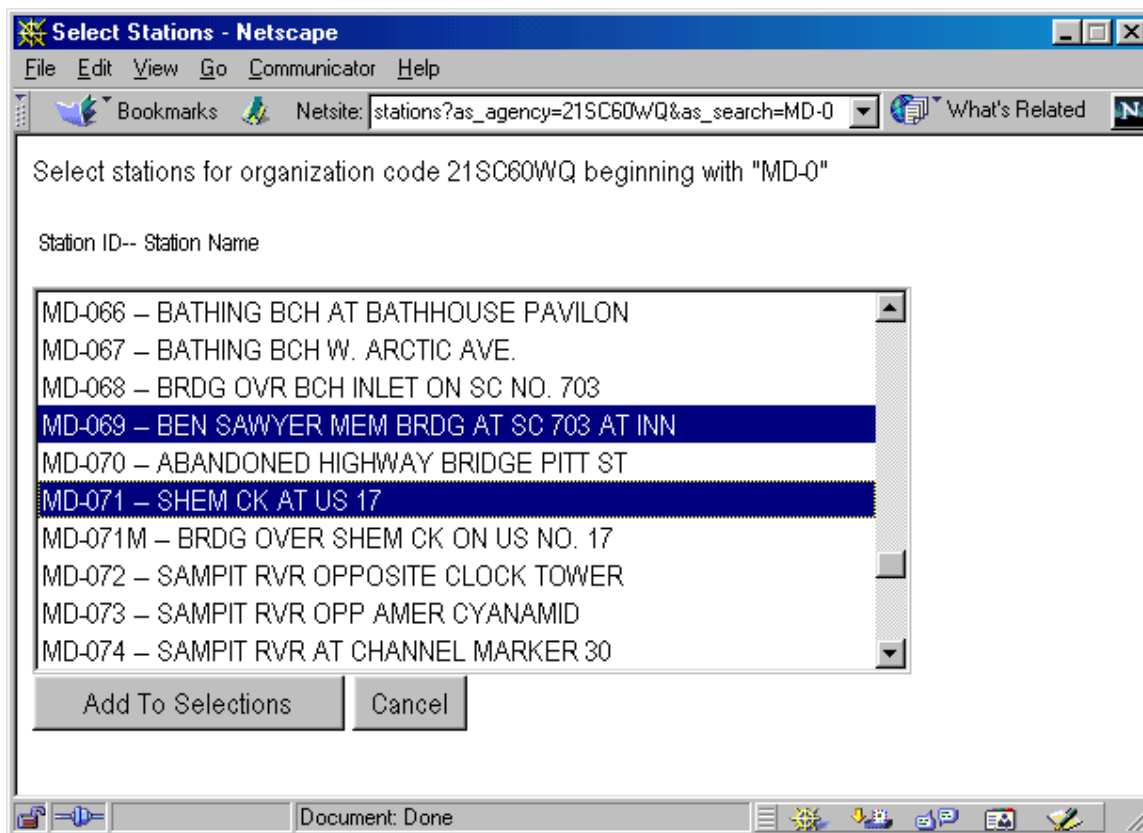
- A link to the "User Guide".
- A "Station Type" section with the instruction: "You **must** select one or more station types in order to submit a query." Below this are three checked checkboxes: ☒ Surface Water, ☒ Ground Water, and ☒ Pipe.
- A requirement: "You must complete **at least one** of the following station criteria."
- An "Organization Code" section with the instruction: "You may submit a query for only one Organization at a time." Below this is a text input field containing "21SC60WQ" and a "Look Up" button.
- A "Station IDs: (requires Organization Code)" section with the instruction: "Search for stations beginning with a particular term by typing characters into the small box below and pressing the Search button." Below this is a "Search String:" input field containing "MD-0" and a "Search" button. A dropdown list shows the results: "MD-001, MD-002, MD-003, MD-004, MD-005, MD-006, MD-007,".

Station Type: Check all three boxes, **Surface Water**, **Ground Water**, and **Pipe**. This will ensure that you will get all available data.

Organization Code: Type in **21SC60WQ**

Station IDs: If you know the monitoring site numbers for which you wish to retrieve data they can be typed into the lower box in a continuous string separated by commas, e.g., MD-210, SV-363, etc.

If there are multiple site numbers beginning with the same characters, another option is to use the “Search String:” box. Type in the beginning characters and click Search. This brings up a pick-list of all of the SCDHEC monitoring site numbers beginning with the entered character string. Multiple selections can be made from the displayed list by holding the Ctrl key and clicking on each desired station number, then clicking the “Add To Selections” button.



Continue this process until all the desired sites have been added to the lower box under Station IDs. This is all that is required in this Step. Scroll down to Step 2.

Step 2: Sample Criteria

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window titled "Advanced Query Input - Netscape". The address bar displays "http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/legacy/proc_advanced_query". The browser's toolbar includes buttons for Back, Forward, Reload, Home, Search, Netscape, Print, Security, Shop, and Stop. Below the toolbar, there are links for Bookmarks, Netsite, and What's Related. The main content area features a search interface with a "Look Up" button and a "Count Stations" button. The "Step 2: Sample Criteria" section includes a text box stating "Sample criteria are optional. Please be as specific as possible to limit the scope of your search." Below this, there are input fields for "Begin Date (MM-DD-YYYY)" with the value "01-01-1990" and "End Date (MM-DD-YYYY)" with the value "12-31-1998". There are also input fields for "Upper Depth:" and "Lower Depth:" both followed by "(feet)". A "Sample Type:" section contains two checkboxes: "Continuous" and "Grab". A "Count Samples" button is located to the right of these checkboxes. The "Step 3: Result Criteria" section is partially visible at the bottom, with a text box stating "Result criteria are optional. Please be as specific as possible to limit the scope of your search." The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Document: Done".

Step 2: Sample Criteria

Sample criteria are optional. Please be as specific as possible to limit the scope of your search.

Begin Date (MM-DD-YYYY): 01-01-1990 **End Date (MM-DD-YYYY):** 12-31-1998

Upper Depth: (feet) **Lower Depth:** (feet)

Sample Type:

☐ Continuous ☐ Grab

Count Stations

Count Samples

Step 3: Result Criteria

Result criteria are optional. Please be as specific as possible to limit the scope of your search.

Enter the date range for which you wish to retrieve data, Begin Date and End Date. Be sure to use the date format shown, including the four-digit year.

This is all that is necessary for this Step. Scroll down to Step 3.

Step 3: Result Criteria

Step 3: Result Criteria

Result criteria are optional. Please be as specific as possible to limit the scope of your search.

Result Remark:

☐ All Remarked ☐ All Unremarked

Parameter Codes: (each 5 digit parameter code must be separated with a comma)

Search for parameter codes beginning with a number by typing in the number in the search box and then pressing the "Search by Code" button. Search for parameter names by typing in one or more letters in the search box and pressing the "Search by Name" button.

Search String:

00300,00400,31615,31616,31621,82048,

Composite Statistic:

Parameter Code: If you want to retrieve all data for the specified stations, just leave this field blank. Otherwise, if you know the Parameter Codes for which you wish to retrieve data they can be typed into the lower box in a continuous string separated by commas, e.g., 00300,00400,31616,etc. Note that all 5 digits are required.

If there are multiple Parameter Codes beginning with the same digits another option is to use the "Search String:" box. Type in the beginning characters and click Search by Code. This brings up a pick-list of all of the Parameter Codes beginning with the entered digits. Multiple selections can be made from the displayed list by holding the Ctrl key and clicking on each desired Parameter Code, then clicking the "Add Selections" button. Continue this process until all the desired sites have been added to lower box.

Tip: At lake and estuarine sites, field parameters (DO, water temperature, salinity, conductivity, etc.) may be profiled through the water column, so if retrieving these types of parameters from these waterbody types it is wise to include parameter 82048, Depth to Bottom of the Sampling Interval, in meters. It can then be matched by time to the individual parameter values to determine what depth in the water column they represent.

Using the "Search by Name" button is not recommended. If you type in the word "copper" and click "Search by Name" over 45 choices are displayed that differ in media, fraction, reporting units, analytical procedure, etc. It is not possible to tell which ones have stored data for the agency, sites, and dates you have selected. That is why it is recommended that you refer to the list of codes used by SCDHEC mentioned above, Appendix D: Parameters Sampled at

Ambient Surface Water Quality Monitoring Sites, as the basis for your Parameter Code selections.

This is all that is necessary in this Step. Scroll down to Step 4.

Step 4: Submit Form

Advanced Query Input - Netscape

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Composite Statistics:

A Average
H Maximum
L Minimum
N Number of Observations for the Sample
S Standard Deviation

Clear

Step 4: Submit Form

When you are finished completing your form, click the Done button. **Done**

To clear all fields in the form, click the Clear Form button. **Clear Form**

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This document was last modified Wednesday, June 21, 2000 18:00:00
http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/legacy/proc_advanced_query

Document: Done

Click "Done".

Confirmation Page

Confirmation Page - Netscape

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STORET Home Purpose Query Help SiteMap Pickup
Legacy Data Center

Confirmation Page

Please review the search criteria you have selected. If the information in this table is correct, select a report type and output format below and click on the "Continue" button. Otherwise, you may go back to revise your inputs.

Organization Code	21SC60WQ
Primary Station ID	MD-001 , MD-002 , MD-003 , MD-004 , MD-005 , MD-006 , MD-007
Station Type	S G P
Beginning Date	01-01-1990
Ending Date	12-31-1998
Parameter Codes	00300 , 00400 , 31615 , 31616 , 31621 , 82048

Select a [Report Type](#)

- ☒ Station Description Report
- ☐ Summary Data Report
- ☐ Detailed Data Report

Document: Done

The **Confirmation Page** is now displayed, which gives a summary of what you are requesting.

here for more information.' The status bar at the bottom shows 'Document: Done' and various system icons."/>

Confirmation Page - Netscape

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Ending Date 12-31-1998

Parameter Codes 00300 , 00400 , 31615 , 31616 , 31621 , 82048

Select a Report Type

☐ Station Description Report

☐ Summary Data Report

☒ Detailed Data Report

Choose the Output Format of your report

☐ HTML: Displays directly to browser.

☐ PDF : Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.*

☒ TXT: Comma separated report. Open in separate application such as a word processor or spreadsheet.

Continue >> Back To Form

*Some Internet Explorer users may have difficulties retrieving PDF reports. Click [here](#) for more information.

Document: Done

To obtain the raw data values, under Report Type you must click on the “Detailed Data Report” button.

To obtain an export format that is easily imported into spreadsheet or database applications, under Output Format you must click on the “TXT: Comma separated report. Open in separate application such as a word processor or spreadsheet” button.

Then click the “Continue >>” button at the bottom of the screen.

You will next see a warning screen telling you that the search results could take a minute or more, and to please be patient. Just click the “OK” button.

Search Results for this Detailed Data Report

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window with the title "Search Results - Netscape". The address bar shows the URL "http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/legacy/proc_count_adv". The page content includes the "Office of Water" logo and the "STORE Legacy Data Center" header. The main heading is "Search Results for this Detailed Data Report". Below this, the search statistics are listed:

The number of stations returned:	7
The number of samples returned:	1830
The number of results returned:	4513

Below the statistics, a message states: "Your report will be created in batch overnight because there are more than 50 stations, 400 samples, or 700 results. You may download this report or return to your form to narrow your search."

There is a form with two input fields and two buttons:

Please enter your email address below so that we can notify you when your report is ready.

Please specify three characters to prefix your report name.

The **Search Results for this Detailed Data Report** page is now displayed. It summarizes the amount of data found that satisfies your data request including the number of stations returned, the number of samples returned, and the number of results returned.

Depending on the amount of data found, one of two options appears. If the amount is small, you can go directly to the "Submit" button and click. The results of your request will then be displayed on the screen and you can then save it to your computer's hard drive for later analysis.

If the amount of data is large, i.e., more than 50 stations, 400 samples, or 700 results, then the retrieval will have to run overnight (it is often quicker than that) and will produce a file that you can download the next day. In this case you must enter your email address and you will be notified when your report is ready. You must also specify three characters to prefix your report name so you can more easily find it for downloading the next day. Then you can click the "Submit" button. This will bring up the **Report Notification** page that gives the web address for file pick-up and the name of the file that you will be looking for.



You will receive an E-Mail when your data file is ready. The E-Mail will also contain the web address of the pick-up site as well as the name of the file. When you go to pick up the file it will open in your web browser and you can save it to your computer's hard drive.

Regardless of whether you get the data immediately or overnight, the file structure is a comma delimited text file that can be imported into most spreadsheet or database applications. Note that the numeric result values are displayed in scientific notation. Most spreadsheet or database applications will allow you to reformat these values to straight number results. You may also want to format the "Start Date" field as a date format, as this may be important for later data analyses.

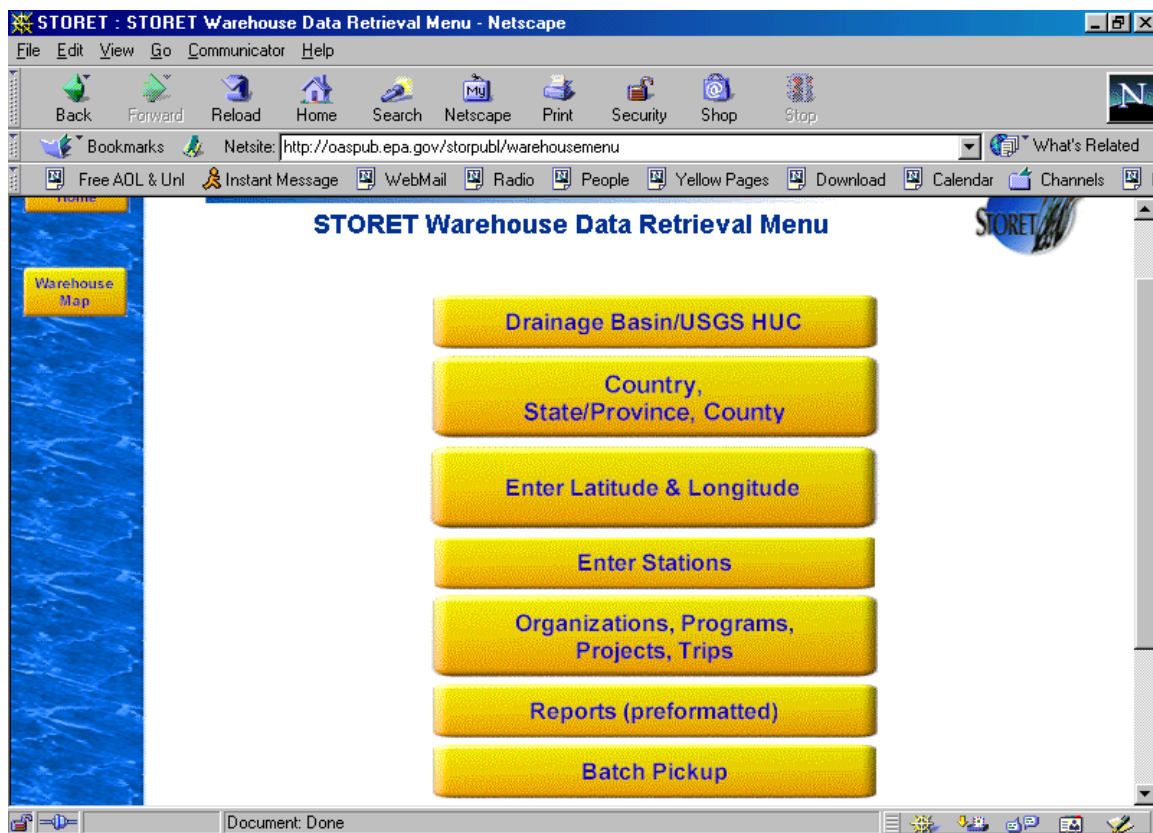
To download post-1998 data from Modernized STORET

There is little control on parameter selection in Modernized STORET. In essence you can only request only all water results, only all sediment results, or all results for the selected sites.

From the main **STORET Database Access** page choose "Obtaining Water Quality Data" (see above).

Scroll down and choose "Browse or Download Modernized STORET Data".

From the **STORET Warehouse Data Retrieval Menu** page choose "Enter Stations".



On the **Enter Stations** page, type in **21SC60WQ** under Station Org ID. Under Station ID, type in the first SCDHEC site number. Click on the yellow button with the “>>” to move the site number to the list of stations on the right half of the screen. Continue typing in site numbers and sending them to the list on the right half of the screen. When your list is complete, scroll down and click on “Show Stations”.

STORET: Enter Stations - Netscape

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Watershed Protection

STORET

Enter Stations

If you are familiar with STORET data, and know the STATION IDs for which you want to monitor data, please enter them below. Otherwise, go back and choose one of the other paths to get a list of Stations.

Station Org ID

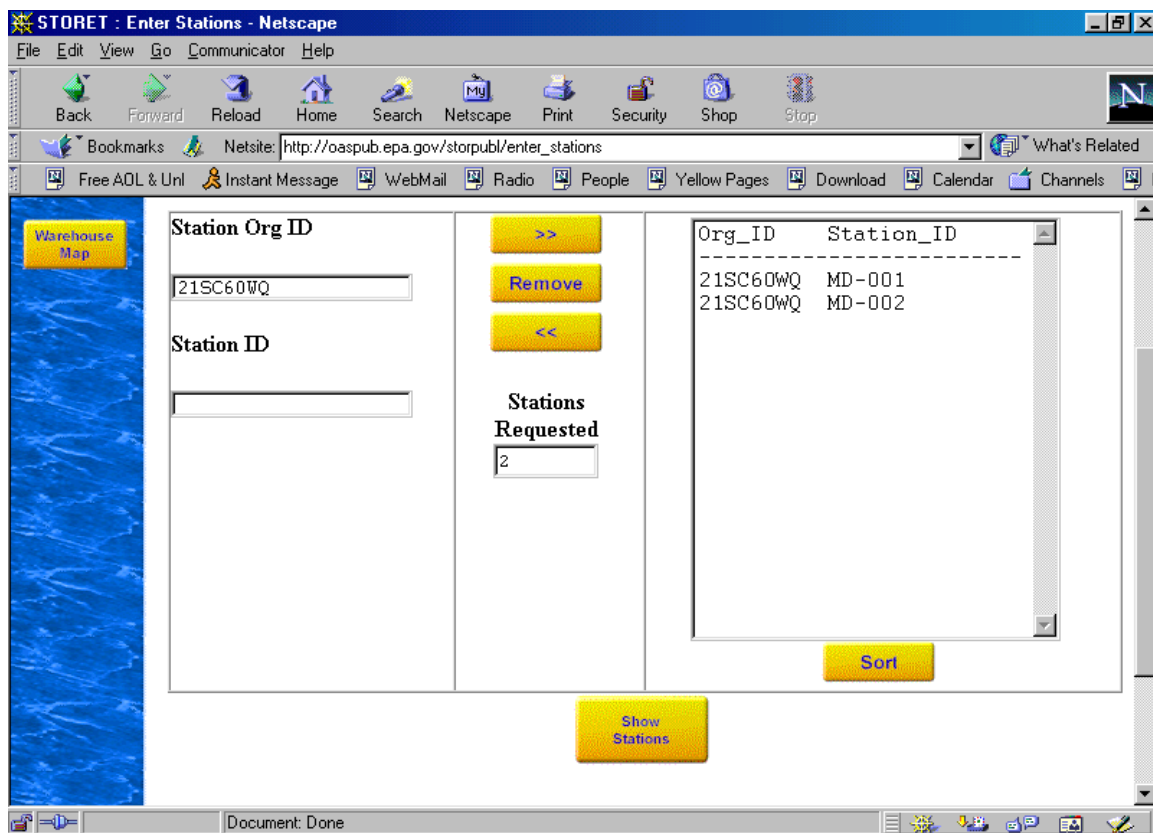
Station ID

>>
Remove
<<

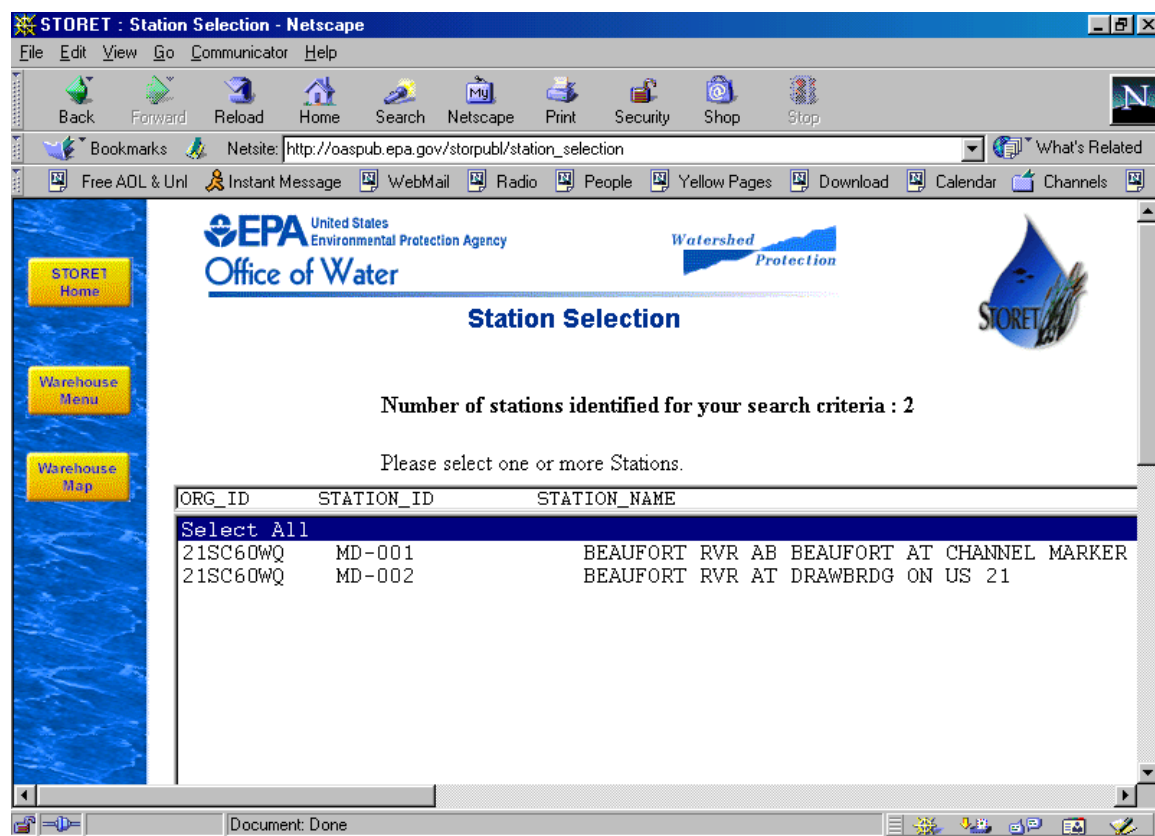
Stations Requested

Org_ID	Station_ID
21SC60WQ	MD-001

javascript:document.form1.T_IS_NBR.focus()



On the **Station Selection** page, leave “Select All” highlighted and scroll down and click on “Station Visits”.



STORET : Station Selection - Netscape

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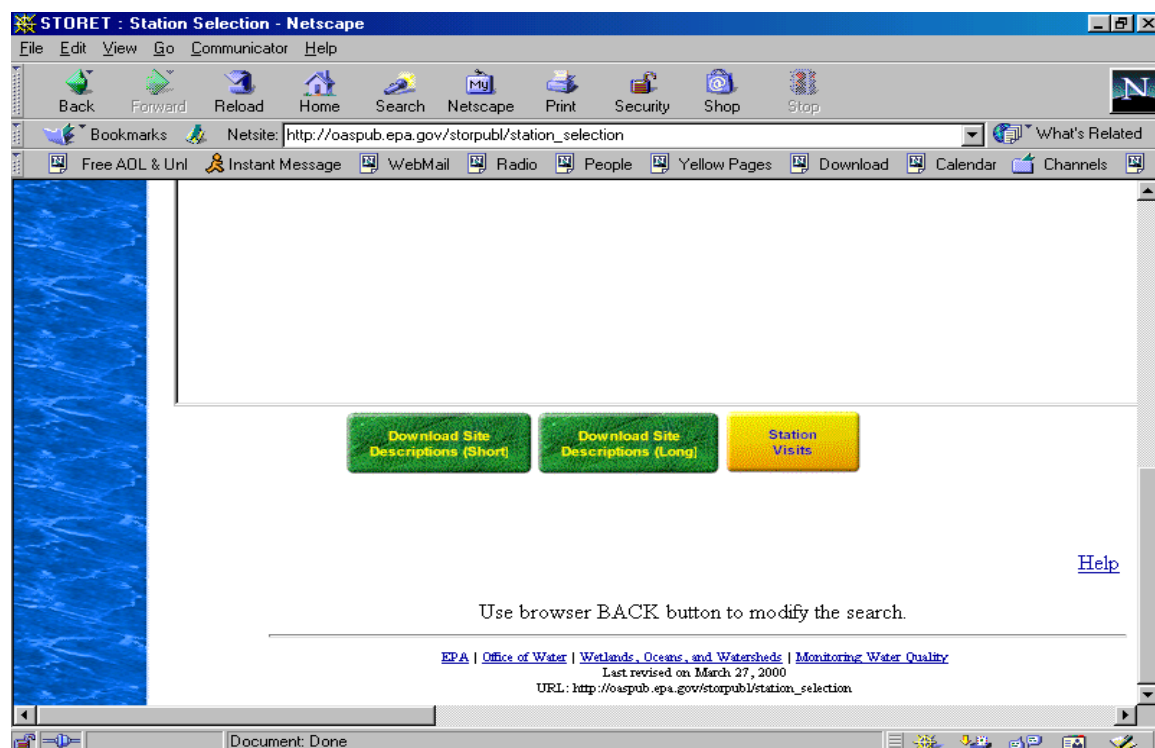
Station Selection

Number of stations identified for your search criteria : 2

Please select one or more Stations.

ORG_ID	STATION_ID	STATION_NAME
Select All		
21SC60WQ	MD-001	BEAUFORT RVR AB BEAUFORT AT CHANNEL MARKER
21SC60WQ	MD-002	BEAUFORT RVR AT DRAWBRDG ON US 21

Document: Done



STORET : Station Selection - Netscape

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Last revised on March 27, 2000
URL: http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/station_selection

[Download Site Descriptions \(Short\)](#) [Download Site Descriptions \(Long\)](#) [Station Visits](#)

[Help](#)

Use browser BACK button to modify the search.

Document: Done

On the **Station Visit Date Filters** page, select the From and To for the date range of interest, then click “Show Station Visits”.

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window titled "STORET : Station Visit Date Filters - Netscape". The address bar shows the URL "http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/station_hub". The page features the EPA Office of Water logo and the "Watershed Protection" logo. A sidebar on the left contains three yellow buttons: "STORET Home", "Warehouse Menu", and "Warehouse Map". The main content area is titled "Station Visit Date Filters" and contains the text "Please specify a Station Visit Arrival Date range." Below this text is a date selection form with two sections: "FROM:" and "TO:". The "FROM:" section has dropdown menus for "JAN", "1", and "1999". The "TO:" section has dropdown menus for "DEC", "31", and "2000". A yellow button labeled "Show Station Visits" is positioned below the date selection form. A "Help" link is located in the bottom right corner of the page. The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Document: Done".

STORET : Station Visit Date Filters - Netscape

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Watershed Protection

Station Visit Date Filters

STORET

Please specify a Station Visit Arrival Date range.

FROM: JAN 1 1999 TO: DEC 31 2000

Show Station Visits

Help

Document: Done

On the **Station Visit Selection** page you can further restrict the sample dates by using the Ctrl key and clicking on only the station visits for which you wish to retrieve data, or you can leave "Select All" highlighted to get results from all visits. Scroll down and click on "Show Activities".

STORET : Station Visit Selection - Netscape

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Station Visit Selection

Stations selected : 2 Station Visits found : 19

Please select one or more Station Visits.

ARRIVAL_DATE	ORG_ID	TRIP_ID	STATION_ID	VISIT#	STATION_NAME
Select All					
05-20-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-001	5	BEA
05-20-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-002	5	BEA
06-23-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-001	6	BEA
06-24-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-002	6	BEA
07-22-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-001	7	BEA
07-22-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-002	7	BEA
08-12-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-002	8	BEA
05-18-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	5	BEA
05-18-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	5	BEA
06-01-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	6	BEA
06-01-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	6	BEA
07-06-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	7	BEA

Document: Done

STORET : Station Visit Selection - Netscape

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05-18-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	5	BEA
05-18-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	5	BEA
06-01-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	6	BEA
06-01-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	6	BEA
07-06-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	7	BEA
07-06-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	7	BEA
08-29-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	8	BEA
08-29-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	8	BEA
09-14-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	9	BEA
09-14-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	9	BEA
10-26-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-001	10	BEA
10-26-2000	21SC60WQ	SWQ-2000	MD-002	10	BEA

Show Activities

Show Activities

[Help](#)

Use browser BACK button to modify the search.

[EPA](#) | [Office of Water](#) | [Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds](#) | [Monitoring Water Quality](#)

Last revised on March 27, 2000

URL: http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/Station_Visit_Selection

javascript:document.FORM1.submit()

On the **Activity Filters** page you can select results for water only, sediment only, or leave “Select All” highlighted. Scroll down and click on “Show Activities”.

STORET : Activity Filters - Netscape

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Activity Filters

Station Visit(s) selected : 43

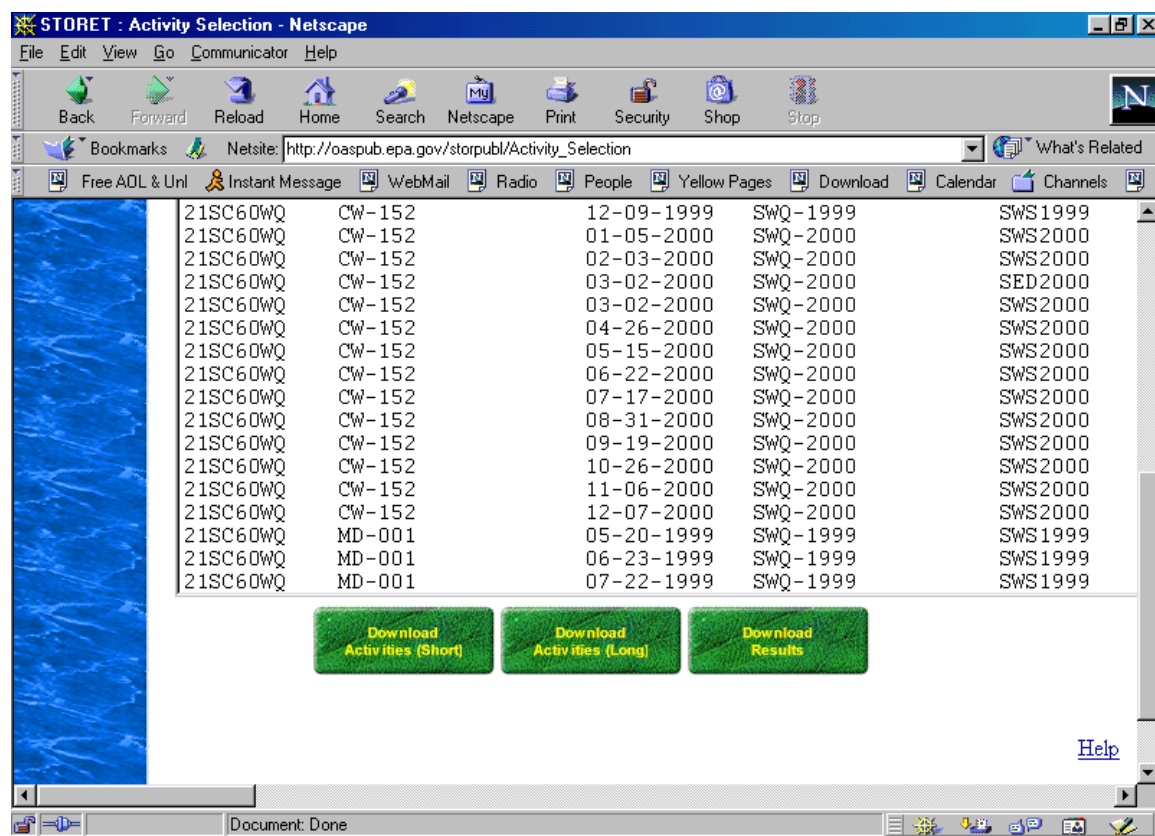
05-11-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	CW-152	5
05-20-1999	21SC60WQ	SWQ-1999	MD-001	5

Please select one or more Activity Medium/Type Combinations.

ACTIVITY_MEDIUM	ACTIVITY_TYPE
Select All	
Sediment	Sample
Water	Sample

Show Activities

On the **Activity Selection** page, leave “Select All” highlighted and scroll down and click on “Download Results”.

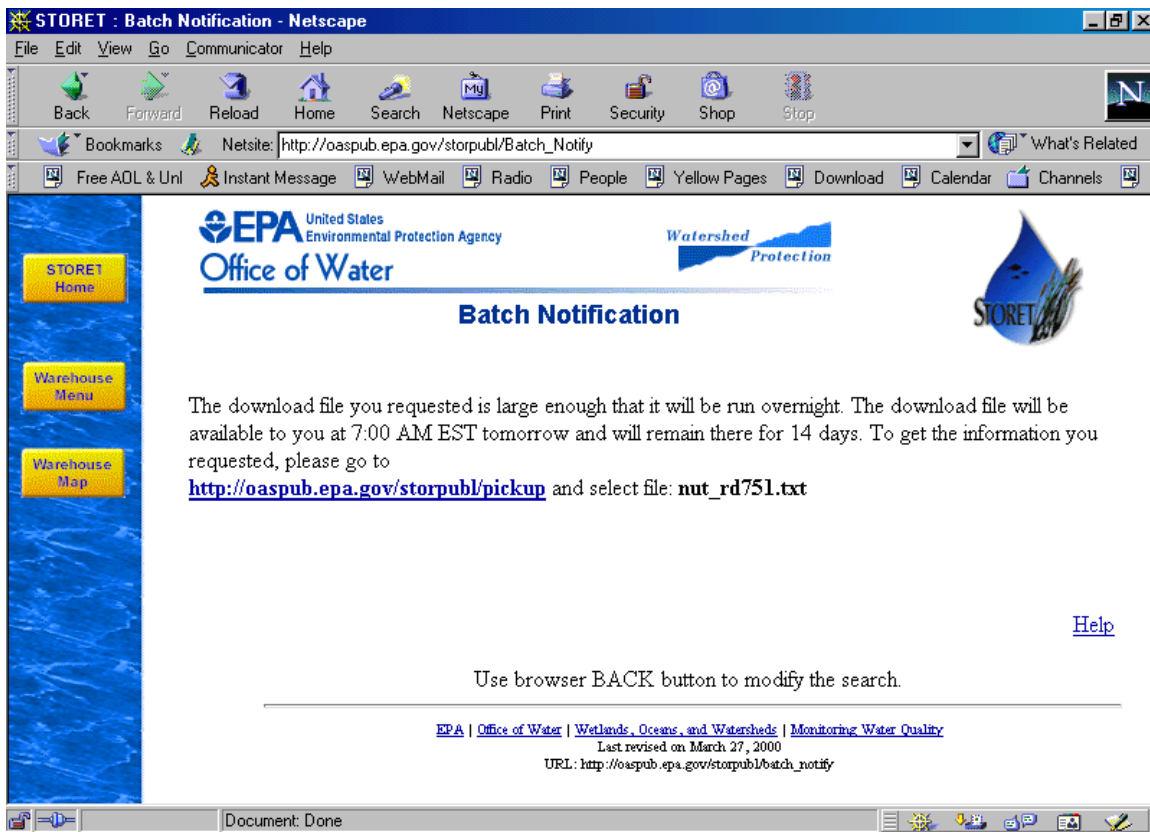


Depending on the amount of data found, one of two options appears. If the amount is small, the **Download Results** page is displayed and you can click on [Download your file now...](#). The results of your request will then be displayed on the screen and you can then save it to your computer's hard drive for later analysis.

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window titled "STORET : Activity Batch Confirmation - Netscape". The address bar shows the URL "http://oaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/activity_hub". The page features the EPA logo and "Office of Water" branding. A sidebar on the left contains buttons for "STORET Home", "Warehouse Menu", and "Warehouse Map". The main content area is titled "Activity Batch Confirmation" and displays "Activities Returned: 256". A message states: "The number of activities exceeds the 200 activity limit. Your report will require an overnight batch job with notification of completion via e-mail." Below this, there are two input fields: "Please enter your e-mail address." and "Please enter a three character prefix for your report." A yellow "Submit" button is positioned at the bottom of the form. The browser's status bar at the bottom indicates "Document: Done".

If the amount of data is large, i.e., more than 200 activities, then the retrieval will have to run overnight (it is often quicker than that) and will produce a file that you can download the next day. In this case the **Activity Batch Confirmation** page appears and you must enter your E-Mail address. You will receive an E-Mail notification when your report is ready. You must also specify three characters to prefix your report name so you can more easily find it for downloading the next day. Then you can click the "Submit" button.

This will bring up the **Batch Notification** page that gives the web address for file pick-up and the name of the file that you will be looking for.



You will receive an E-Mail when your data file is ready. The E-Mail will also contain the web address of the pick-up site as well as the name of the file. When you go to pick up the file, it will open in your web browser and you can save it to your computer's hard drive.

Regardless of whether you get the data immediately or overnight, the file structure is a tilde (~) delimited text file that can be imported into most spreadsheet or database applications. You may want to format the "Act Start" field as a date format, as this may be important for later data analyses.